

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SEOUL 03300 040853Z

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01

OMB-01 CU-02 /060 W

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P R 040828Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6938

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT KS

SUBJECT: TRIAL AND SENTENCING OF MEMBERS OF ALLEGED UNIVERSITY
ESPIONAGE RING

REF: SEOUL 9048 (DTG 240904Z NOV 75)

SUMMARY: ON APRIL 30 AND MAY 1, SEOUL DISTRICT COURT SENTENCED THREE PERSONS TO DEATH AND 12 PERSONS TO SENTENCES RANGING FROM 10 TO TWO YEARS FOR THEIR ALLEGED INVOLVEMENT IN A NORTH KOREAN SPY RING OPERATING ON UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES. MAJORITY OF THOSE SENTENCED WERE STUDENTS FROM KOREAN FAMILIES LIVING IN JAPAN. SIX PERSONS FROM ORIGINAL 21 MEMBER GROUP ARRESTED IN NOVEMBER REMAIN TO BE TRIED. END SUMMARY.

1. ON APRIL 30, SEOUL DISTRICT COURT SENTENCED PAEK OK-KWANG AND MISS KIM OK-CHA TO DEATH AND 12 OTHER STUDENTS TO PRISON SENTENCES RANGING THROUGH TEN, SEVEN, FIVE, THREE AND A HALF AND TWO YEARS FOR THEIR ALLEGED INVOLVEMENT IN A NORTH KOREAN ESPIONAGE RING OPERATING ON UNIVERSITY CAMPUSES IN PUSAN AND SEOUL. ON MAY 1, KIM CHOL-HYON, GRADUATE STUDENT AT HANKUK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY IN SEOUL WAS ALSO SENTENCED TO DEATH FOR HIS INVOLVEMENT IN THE ALLEGED SPY RING. SENTENCING OF ONE OTHER SNU STUDENT

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PAGE 02 SEOUL 03300 040853Z

SET FOR APRIL 4 WHILE 5 STUDENTS REMAIN TO BE TRIED UNDER ANTI-

COMMUNIST AND NATIONAL SECURITY LAWS.

2. ON NOVEMBER 22, TEN DAYS AFTER ACTUAL ARREST OF THOSE INVOLVED, ROKG PUBLICLY ANNOUNCED DETECTION OF UNIVERSITY SPY RING AND THE ARREST OF 21 ALLEGED NORTH KOREAN ESPIONAGE AGENTS OPERATING ON CAMPUSES OF PUSAN UNIV. (SEVEN), SEOUL NATIONAL UNIV. (FIVE), KOREA UNIVERSITY (ONE), CATHOLIC MEDICAL COLLEGE (ONE), HANKUK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY (FOUR). GROUP ALSO INCLUDED THREE NON-STUDENTS. ALMOST ALL WERE KOREAN RESIDENTS OF JAPAN STUDYING IN KOREA.

3. ACCORDING TO INDICTMENT BROUGHT AGAINST THEM, STUDENTS WERE RECRUITED BY NORTH KOREAN INTELLIGENCE OPERATIVE IN JAPAN AND INFILTRATED INTO KOREAN UNIVERSITIES TO FOMENT UNREST AMONG STUDENTS AND STIMULATE ANTI-GOVERNMENT DEMONSTRATIONS.

4. OF THE ALLEGED SPY RING, PAEK OK-KWANG, AN EMPLOYEE OF THE OSAKA JUNIOR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, KIM OK-CHA, A HISTORY STUDENT AT PUSAN UNIV. AND KIM CHOL-HYON, GRADUATE STUDENT AT HANKUK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY WERE ALLEGED TO HAVE RECEIVED ESPIONAGE TRAINING IN NORTH KOREA. THEY RECEIVED DEATH SENTENCES.

5. SINCE FLURRY OF PUBLICITY ON NOVEMBER 22 ATTENDING ANNOUNCEMENT OF DETECTION OF SPY RING NOTHING ABOUT SUBJECT HAS APPEARED IN KOREAN PRESS AND TRIAL SESSIONS AND ABOVE SENTENCES HAVE NOT BEEN REPORTED, EXCEPT BY FOREIGN WIRE SERVICES. JAPANESE REPORTER HAS BEEN OUR MAJOR SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT TRIALS.

6. DEFENSE LAWYERS HAVE INDICATED THAT SENTENCES OF ALL WILL BE APPEALED.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TRIALS, COURT DECISIONS, UNIVERSITIES, STUDENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 MAY 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: BoyleJA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976SEOUL03300
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760170-1201
From: SEOUL
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760593/aaaadbzt.tel
Line Count: 92
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 SEOUL 9048
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: BoyleJA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 FEB 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <10 FEB 2004 by morefirh>; APPROVED <22 SEP 2004 by BoyleJA>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TRIAL AND SENTENCING OF MEMBERS OF ALLEGED UNIVERSITY ESPIONAGE RING
TAGS: PINT, KS, (PAEK OK-KWANG), (KIM OK-CHA), (KIM CHOL-HYON)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006